HEALTH LEVEL SEVEN (HL7) APPROVES RBAC

On 04 May 2004, the Healthcare RBAC TF presented a proposal to the HL7 Board of Directors at the HL7 Working Group Meeting held in San Antonio, Texas. Later that evening, the HL7 Board of Directors approved the adoption of the RBAC effort (i.e., the specification of permission definitions as a healthcare standard) into its family of standards. HL7 is the only Standards Development Organization capable of taking the leadership role for a single international healthcare standard for interoperable RBAC. Recent RBAC activities were also presented to other HL7 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Technical Committees (TCs), including the Security and Accountability SIG, Government Projects SIG, Personnel Management TC,and CCOW TC.

This approval by the HL7 Board of Directors caps a one-year effort led by the Healthcare RBAC Task Force (TF). The Healthcare RBAC TF, with representatives from the Department of Defense (DoD), IHS, VHA and Kaiser Permanente (KP), worked with HL7 technical committees and HL7 management to validate a comprehensive role engineering process prior to making their recommendation to the Board. When completed, the specification will promote interoperability among healthcare organizations, strengthen enterprise security infrastructures, and provide essential healthcare-specific RBAC content, enabling scaleable healthcare service-oriented architectures for identity and access management.

ASTM E31 ACCEPTS ASTM E-1986 MODIFICATIONS

On 17 May 2004, the VHA/IHS RBAC TF presented Recommended Revisions to the ASTM E-1986 Standard Guide for Information Access Privileges to Health Information list of “Healthcare Personnel That Warrant Differing Levels of Access Control” to the ASTM E31 Committee. The ASTM E31 Committee enthusiastically accepted the modifications and plans to ballot the changes. The proposed changes only covered licensed healthcare professionals. Fourteen ‘basic roles’ used for connection and authentication were proposed to ASTM. The committee requested that a crosswalk be done between the proposed ASTM E1986 categories with the roles for licensed health care professionals in Florida since there are on the order of 160 license types in use in Florida.

Additionally, the Healthcare Scenario Roadmap spreadsheet was presented, showing a hierarchy of licensed providers and associated clinical healthcare workflow items.

NEXT STEP FOR RBAC STANDARD IS ISO APPROVAL

The NIST Draft RBAC Standard is now ANSI approved. The new standard is called *American National Standard for Information Technology - Role-Based Access Control*, ANSI INCITS 359-2004, by the Information Technology Industry Council. The Healthcare RBAC TF adopted use of this standard at the beginning of the RBAC effort and continues to be in harmony with the standard.

The next step is to get ISO approval. A technical interchange meeting was held with NIST RBAC representatives to discuss the Healthcare RBAC Task Force activities and the further evolution of the RBAC standard. NIST has invited VHA to participate on a working group to maintain the RBAC ANSI standard and to develop an ISO RBAC standard. This standard will be tracked as it progresses through the ISO standardization process.

HEALTHCARE SCENARIO ROADMAP

The Healthcare Scenario Roadmap developed by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA)/Indian Health Service (IHS) Role-Based Access Control (RBAC) Task Force (TF) was presented in May 2004 to both Health Level Seven (HL7) and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). It has been populated during weekly discussions with TF clinicians from the

VHA/IHS RBAC TF. The TF began with the list of "Healthcare Personnel That Warrant Differing Levels of Access Control" contained within the ASTM E-1986 Standard Guide for Information Access Privileges to Health Information. The VHA RBAC TF have initially concentrated on the 16 licensed health care providers, identifying and associating 4 high level and 74 detailed clinical activities performed by those providers.

The roadmap can function as a foundational tool to assist in defining the scope of the RBAC modeling effort, as well as be utilized as a quick reference of healthcare scenarios. The roadmap presents scaleable management of user permissions in the form of a list of tasks as a healthcare standard.

PEER REVIEW OF ROLE ENGINEERING PROCESS

The *Role Based Access Control (RBAC) Role Engineering Process,* Version 2.0 is completed and is currently undergoing approval by the Healthcare RBAC TF voting members, which include DoD, IHS, VHA and KP. The document will be distributed and posted on the RBAC website when the voting period is concluded.

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